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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/202,759	02/28/2000	KARL-GUNTHER HANSEL	SIMNS4355.0	3327

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VENABLE
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EXAMINER
AZARIAN, SEYED H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2625	11

DATE MAILED: 05/29/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/202,759	HANSEL ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Seyed Azarian	2625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *04 February 2003* .

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-14* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-14* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *22 December 1998* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) *9* .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

FINAL ACTION

RESPONSE TO AMENDMENT

1. Applicant's amendment filed, 2/4/2003, has been entered and made of record.

2. Applicants' arguments with regards to Claims 1-14 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

3. Applicants' argues in essence that there is no teaching to "automatic OCR evaluation for information recognized within a specific time interval during the view coding".

With respect to applicant's argument Examiner disagrees and indicates Hiramatsu et al teaches the following features (Fig. 4, item 11, column 5, lines 9-16, shows the arrangement of optical reader 11, and converting image to electrical signal through a CCD line sensor and optical reader 11 picks up the hole image of postal matter by digitizing the electrical signal. And Fig. 8 to 10, column 3, lines 12-20, show the flow chart for image reader, after image reader fails to recognize, is corrected/input by video coding. Fig. 11, column 12, lines 38-64, if the verification result indicates an incorrect code, the incorrect data is transferred into bar code and converted into bar code information, Fig. 11, flow chart the blinking display is performed depending on whether character/code and image reader 2 fails to read one or plurality of characters, if there is NO in step ST 100, blinking processing is not performed and if YES in step

ST 100, the number of read-failed characters checked, and operation similar to the above operation is repeated.

And furthermore in response to applicant's argument, limitation in amended claim, "specified timing" Hiramatsu et al teaches column 6, lines 15-19, by displaying character/code and image reader at a user code providing a video coding, which allows an operator to perform a coding operation efficiently and tirelessly within a short period of time.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-14, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiramatsu et al (U.S. patent 5,697,504) in view of Danielson et al (U.S. patent 5,805,474).

Regarding claim 1, Hiramatsu et al discloses, a method for processing goods with an automatic address reading system, wherein for each item an image of the surface containing the address information, (Fig. 1 and 2, column 3, lines 35-49, the address information and image surface).

Obtained for each item and is supplied to an OCR unit for the automatic evaluation device, if the address information is not recognized unambiguously, (Fig. 4, column 5, lines 9-16, to converting image to electrical signal through a CCD line sensor).

The associated image is transmitted further to a video-coding station for video coding, (see Fig. 8 and 10, column 3, lines 12-20, vide coding also column 1, line 53-63).

Characterized in that the image of each address information that is not if unambiguously recognized within a specific time interval, (column 16, lines 16-19, time period). By means of video coding is transmitted along with the information on recognized address components, obtained during the video coding, to the OCR unit for further automatic evaluation for an address interpretation, (column 9, lines 20-35, refer to second candidate information and specific address code).

However Hiramatsu et al does not explicitly state "specific time interval". On the other hand Danielson et al in the same field of scanning teaches, (column 24, lines 45-55, refer to specific short time interval).

Therefore it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made, to modify Hiramatsu et al invention according to teaching of Danielson et al, because it provide and achieves accuracy and processing of the time, which implement fix rate of time limits.

Regarding claim 2, Hiramatsu et al discloses, a method according to claim 1, characterized in that the image of each address information that is not unambiguously recognized during the further automatic OCR evaluation for the address interpretation is transmitted along

with the obtained information to a video-coding station, (column 1, lines 54-64, when the recognizing means has not recognized the user code).

Regarding claim 3, Hiramatsu et al discloses, a method according to claim 1, characterized in that an extraction coding is carried out according to the extraction rules during the first video coding, (column 2, lines 10-19, the code extraction).

Regarding claim 4, Hiramatsu et al discloses, a method according to claim 2, characterized in that a selection coding takes place during the additional video coding, in such a way that a selection is made from a number of alternative evaluation results, (column 9, line 59, through column 10, line 10, refer to second candidate information and hole image display).

Regarding claim 6, Hiramatsu et al discloses, a method according to claim 5, characterized in that alternative evaluation results are formed from address information, which contains additional sorting information, (Fig. 6, item 58-62, column 10, lines 43-54, the memory and storage area).

Regarding claim 7, Hiramatsu et al discloses a method claim 1, characterized in that a first component of the address information is evaluated and that a second component of the address information is evaluated and that the results of these evaluations are checked with respect to mutual consistency, (column 4, lines 32-38, refer to barcode information and basis of read result).

Regarding claim 10, Hiramatsu et al discloses a method according to claim 1 characterized in that the goods, for which no complete, additional automatic on-line evaluation or an evaluation through video coding of the address information has taken place, are provided with an identification marking (TID) for an additional automatic or video coding, to be

performed off-line, (column 4, lines 38-50, refer to user code and ID number (or identification marking)).

Regarding claim 12, Hiramatsu et al discloses a method according to claim 1 characterized in that a differentiation between address information and sender information is made for the video coding, (column 15, lines 3-11, refer to determining the zip code digits).

Regarding claim 13, Hiramatsu et al discloses a device for carrying out the method according to claim 1, comprising an automatic address reading system which has a device for obtaining the images of the goods (120), an OCR processor (130) for the automatic evaluation of address information containing images of the item surfaces, a device for video coding the images of item surfaces, containing the address information, by using at least one video-coding station (200), an image controller (170) for controlling the data flow between the OCR processor (130), (claims above also Fig. 5, item 35, column 6, lines 24-29, refer to controller).

Regarding claims 5,8-9, 11 and 14, the arguments analogous to those presented for claims above are applicable.

Other prior art cited

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

U.S. patent (4,697,504) to Mampe et al is cited for remote video scanning automated sorting system.

U.S. patent (5,031,223) to Rosenbaum et al is cited for system and method for deferred processing of OCR scanned mail.

U.S. patent (5,641,5753) to Tamada is cited for mail sorting apparatus.

Conclusion

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Contact Information

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Seyed Azarian whose telephone number is (703) 306-5907. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bhavesh Mehta, can be reached at (703) 308-5246.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Or faxed to:

(703) 872-9314, (***informal*** or ***draft*** communications, should be clearly labeled to expedite delivery to examiner).

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA., Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to T.C. customer service office whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.

Seyed Azarian

Patent Examiner

Group Art Unit 2625

May 18, 2003

Jayanti K. Patel
Primary Examiner